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LIVESTOCK CLUB EXPERIENCE AS A TRAINING
FOR LIFE WORK

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FEB 2 1933

A radio talk by C. D. Lowe, Senior Extension Animal Husbandman, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. broadcast Saturday, January 8, 1938, over WMAL and 83 other stations of the National Broadcasting Company.

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It was my recent privilege to observe a 4-H club boy in a situation filled with possibilities. What he did under the circumstances could make or lose friends for club work in general. The occasion was a public one and a large crowd, many of whom were prominent in business and agriculture, was present. The boy's pig, a barrow, had just been knocked down to the highest bidder. The price was 24 cents a pound, when such hogs were selling on the open market for about 9 cents. As the auctioneer's hammer fell and the magic word "Sold" was uttered, the boy rushed to the side of the buyer and said in a voice loud enough for all to hear, "Thanks, Mister, but that's a lot more than he is worth." From what I knew of that boy's need for the actual necessities of life and the fact that he planned to continue in pig club work, that statement took courage.

And then there is Arnold Moore of Oklahoma, a 4-H pig club boy. He was fortunate enough to have owned the best barrow on exhibition at the American Royal Live Stock Show in Kansas City last October. He took the pig to the International Live Stock Exposition at Chicago in December and it was the first 4-H club pig to win the grand championship award in this great show. The resourcefulness, independence and determination of this young man were shown by the fact that he was not for a moment puzzled by the problem of transporting his porker from far off Oklahoma to the show at Kansas City. How did he do it? Well, he simply loaded Mr. Pig, which incidentally weighed nearly 300 pounds, into the back seat of his fliッver and landed him at the exhibition place in such excellent condition that he outdistanced all contenders for the supreme honors of the hog world.

And so it is with tens of thousands of other 4-H club members throughout the nation. Not only are they learning and applying the basic principles of successful livestock production but are also developing human traits and judgments of immeasurable worth to them in the future, regardless of their choice of vocation.

But 4-H livestock club work is by no means confined to show-yard experiences. They are merely the show windows of the project. The day by day feeding, care and management of their animals, the keeping of records and the participation in meetings and other group activities all provide members with opportunities and experiences of great practical value. And here the words of Walt Whitman have special significance. He once said: "I think I could turn and live with animals. They are so placid and self-contained.... They do not sweat and whine about their condition. They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins."

(over)

Not one is dissatisfied; not one is discontented with the mania for owning things...." Well, so much for Mr. Whitmar's philosophy.

Many former 4-H club members have become prominent livestock breeders. Among those who may be mentioned are - Harry Knabe of Nebraska, Claire Gilbert of Indiana, and Raymond Mohr of Illinois. Nor have the boys won all the honors in livestock club work. For there is Katherine Shelton of New York State whose success typifies the achievements of many 4-H club girls in the breeding and feeding of livestock.

Such individual accomplishments as have just been mentioned serve to picture 4-H livestock club work in general. All States and practically all counties have active 4-H livestock clubs which are demonstrating to their own members and to adults as well, better practices in animal husbandry. The magnitude of livestock club work is indicated by the fact that more than 132,000 boys and 10,000 girls participated in such work last year and that they owned more than 200,000 head of animals which were used in their project activities. In the aggregate that is big business. More than that, it is an effective educational movement.

And so in closing I say, Hail to 4-H livestock club work! It builds character, it develops judgment, it makes men and women, it produces future livestock leaders. It is an economic and social asset to the nation. It merits your interest and support.

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